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E U L O G Y

ON THE LATE

D^r Bucklin

JAMES M. PENDLETON, M.D.

DELIVERED BY APPOINTMENT

OF THE

NEW-YORK CITY AND COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY,

IN THE

Hall of Columbia College,

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FEBRUARY 9th, 1832.

BY GUNNING S. BEDFORD, M. D.

Lecturer on Obstetrics in the City of New-York; member of the Medical Society of the City and County of New-York; member of the New-York Literary and Philosophical Society; member of the Historical Society, &c.

NEW-YORK:

JOHN WATT, PRINTER, No. 69 COURTLANDT STREET.

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Extract from the Minutes of a regular Meeting of the Medical Society of the City and County of New-York, held January 9th, 1832.

“RESOLVED, That Gunning S. Bedford, M. D., be appointed to deliver an Eulogium on the life and character of our late fellow member, JAMES M. PENDLETON, M. D.”

FRANCIS W. WALSH, M. D., *Secretary.*

At a regular Meeting of the Medical Society of the City and County of New-York, held on the 13th day of February, 1832, it was

“RESOLVED, That the Eulogium on the late James M. Pendleton, M. D., delivered before this Society by Gunning S. Bedford, M. D., be published, and that a Committee of three be appointed for that purpose.”

Whereupon the following gentlemen were appointed, viz. :—A. D. WILSON, M. D., J. S. BOWRON, M. D., L. S. COMSTOCK, M. D.

FRANCIS W. WALSH, *Secretary Med. Soc.*

DR. G. S. BEDFORD,

Dear Sir—In accordance with the vote of the Medical Society of the City and County of New-York, we respectfully request a copy of your Eulogium on the late James M. Pendleton, M. D., for publication.

A. D. WILSON, M. D.	}	<i>Committee.</i>
J. S. BOWRON, M. D.		
L. S. COMSTOCK, M. D.		



EULOGY.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:

IN obedience to the vote of the Medical Society of the city and county of New-York, I rise to address you on a subject which is calculated to arrest attention, and elicit the warmest feelings of the heart. Death has been among us, and has removed from the sphere of our admiration, one of the most talented, honorable, and virtuous of our body. But a few weeks since, the individual, whose memory we are now called upon to commemorate, delighted many of you with his eloquent and liberal remarks in reference to the occasion on which he addressed you. Every thing was then bright before him—the prospects held out to his ardent mind were most flattering—he had embarked with us in the cause of science and humanity—he had shown his willingness to sacrifice personal interest—his determination to advance the welfare of his fellow-citizens, by promoting the extension of knowledge. Is not a bereavement like this calculated to generate the keenest affliction within the bosom of every feeling man? Is there one here whose heart does not respond in sentiment to my own, when I declare that I am acquainted with no individual among us, whose death we would have more reason to lament than that of our late distinguished fellow member.

Death, under any circumstances, fills the heart of friends with deep affliction; it casts around society a gloom, which nothing but time can dissipate; it harrows up the feelings of friendship, and leaves a chasm in our affections. There is, however, consolation for those left behind, when they are enabled to reflect, as in the present case we have ample reason to do, on the virtues, talents, and philanthropy of the

deceased. It is true, that such reflection will serve, in great measure, to alleviate the distress, and reconcile the feelings to the loss thus sustained. But, on the other hand, when death takes from us an individual, adorned with all the virtues that can make humanity lovely, one whose life was spent in advancing the general interests of mankind, the whole community are then called upon to acknowledge the importance of such a character.

Then, as a testimony of respect to the memory of our departed friend, we have convened this day for the purpose of reviewing, in solemn recollection, the character which he has left us all as a common inheritance.

The task of presenting you with an outline of the life and character of the deceased has been assigned me, more, I am sure, through your own kindness, than any merit of my own. The death of our distinguished friend has generated within my own breast feelings which it would be difficult to pourtray. Having been placed in a situation which admitted of a free interchange of sentiments, and which was calculated to afford me a fair opportunity of appreciating his many amiable qualities, I have reason, indeed, to regret his premature death. In him, I found a valuable, sincere, and honest friend.

But what is this compared to the loss sustained by the community at large—to the irreparable loss sustained by the devoted objects of his love! Here is a spectacle sufficient to excite the feelings of the most obdurate heart, and call forth the sympathy of every reflecting mind. Young, ardent, exemplary—in the midst of his usefulness, at a time when his reputation was acknowledged, and he was fast gaining the confidence of the public, he is taken away from us; his family are deprived of a kind and affectionate husband, of a fond and devoted parent—his profession of a talented and honorable member—his church of a sincere and practical Christian—society of a cheerful, benevolent, useful man. His loss will be deeply felt and acknowledged by the widow and orphan. It was in the exercise of that noble virtue,

in the observance of which every benevolent man takes pleasure—I mean charity—that the character of our friend was truly admirable. How many are the hearts now throbbing with grateful emotion at the recollection of the numerous kindnesses which he rendered them in the hour of want and distress !

In the discharge of his professional duties, whilst manifesting an ardent zeal and solicitude for the welfare of his patients, and devoting all the energy of his mind to their service and comfort, it will not be said that he was actuated by the sordid motive of acquiring emolument, but by the irresistible dictates of that tenderness and sympathy, which are identified with the best feelings of the heart.

Dr. James Murison Pendleton was born in the city of New-York, on the 14th of January, 1796. He sprung from a family of the highest respectability, remarkable for their virtue and intelligence. His father was a native of Virginia, and, at the age of nineteen, entered the revolutionary army. He served with great credit during the whole war, the latter part of which he was Aid to General Greene, and received the thanks of Congress for his patriotic conduct at Eutaw Springs. After the termination of the war, he settled in Georgia, and commenced the study of law. By his talents and industry, he in a few years so far distinguished himself as to receive the appointment of United States' Judge for that district. He married a daughter of the late Dr. John Bard, and some years after was persuaded by that gentleman to remove to this city, where he soon acquired extensive practice in the law. His health becoming impaired, and being in easy circumstances, he retired to a farm at Hyde Park, Dutchess County, where, in agricultural occupations, the business of the County Court, of which he was one of the judges, and the society of his friends, his life was honorably, agreeably, and usefully spent. He died in October, 1821, in consequence of a fall from his gig. To use the language of one who was an inmate of his family for several years, "he was a man of sound mind, discrimi-

nating judgment, firm integrity, unwearied industry ; kind and hospitable in the highest degree ; in short, one of the finest specimens of the high-minded, honorable gentleman."

Dr. Pendleton's mother, too, was a woman of no ordinary cast of mind ; to talents of a high order, she added the most sincere piety and benevolence, and an untiring zeal in the performance of all her duties. She did not find it incompatible with these attributes to participate in all the innocent pleasures of society ; and her devotedness to the education of her children, was as honorable to herself, as it was useful to those on whom her tenderest cares were bestowed. As proof of the fruits of her instruction and example, it may be mentioned that Dr. Pendleton, in the hour of dissolution, remarked, that "under God, he owed his present calmness to the early religious education received from his mother." This exemplary woman died at Hyde Park, in 1817.

I ask you, could any thing be more acceptable to a mother's heart ; could she desire gratitude more than this ? When in the hands of death, to hear her son proclaim to surrounding friends, that his mother's care, his mother's example, had saved him from destruction !

Dr. Pendleton, during his infancy, was extremely delicate, and perhaps owed the preservation of his life to the constant and devoted attentions of his mother. His constitution was feeble, and his health continued bad until his 12th year, when, after a residence of three or four years at Litchfield, in Connecticut, it became re-established, and continued, with but few exceptions, firm until within a year of his death.

At this time he was removed to New-York, and entered the grammar school established by the late Dr. Mason. Having spent a year or two in this institution, he was transferred to that of the late George Ironside, at that time a teacher of great celebrity. He continued in this school until he had made the necessary proficiency for admission into Columbia College.

As a school-boy, Dr. Pendleton gave evidences of talent, and was indefatigably industrious. He was ambitious, obedi-

ent, and uniformly a favorite with his teachers. His mind appeared to be fixed on the acquisition of knowledge, and he was always the first among his competitors to receive those honors which were conferred as marks of diligence and good conduct. By his gentlemanly deportment and generous behavior, he won the universal esteem of his classmates, and gained the confidence of his instructors.

Having entered Columbia College, he applied closely to the different branches taught in that institution, and distinguished himself both by his proficiency and honorable conduct towards his Professors and classmates. He received the degree of A. B., and then made choice of the profession of medicine, which he prosecuted with great ardor. His selection of a profession being entirely voluntary, and desirous of enjoying the best opportunities of instruction the country afforded, he entered the office of Dr. David Hosack, under whose guidance he made considerable progress in the science of medicine. His preceptor being amply qualified to render every necessary assistance, and always ready to foster talent and protect genius, exhibited in this particular instance the pleasure he derived from imparting instruction to such as were anxious to receive it. Dr. P. commenced the study of medicine under Dr. Hosack in the year 1814, and from the diligent manner in which he prosecuted his studies, together with the superior advantages to be derived from the talents and learning of his preceptor, it was natural for his friends to count largely on his future eminence.

After pursuing his medical studies with the most intense interest, he received the Doctorate from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in this city. Soon after this honor had been conferred on him, he entered the New-York Hospital, as assistant to the resident Physician. He continued in this institution for two years, one of them as resident Physician. The same diligence which had previously characterized his studies, he now evinced in his new situation. During his residence in the Hospital, he was in the habit of making daily observations in reference to the various diseases, and, besides

the house record, he kept a private book, in which he made an accurate detail of every interesting case that occurred. In this way, he collected much valuable knowledge, and from his constant habit of observing the differences presented in disease, he enjoyed opportunities which, with his peculiar turn of mind, could not but result in considerable advantage.

After leaving the Hospital, he entered on the practice of his profession, and was not discouraged at the apparent neglect which he, in common with all young practitioners in medicine, was treated at the commencement of his professional career ; but occupied his leisure time in adding to his medical knowledge, and in the cultivation of belles-lettres, for which he always manifested great fondness.

Shortly after commencing practice, he united with Dr. Smyth Rogers of this city, in giving a course of lectures to students of medicine. He now began to rise in the estimation of his professional brethren, and his reputation soon increased so as to distinguish him as an ardent, talented, and useful laborer in the field of medical science.

Dr. Pendleton married, in the year 1825, into one of the most respectable and wealthy families of this state. Notwithstanding the affluence in which this connection placed him, his mind was not diverted from the object which had previously occupied so much of his time and attention. He was still wedded to his profession, and continued to manifest the same ardent desire for its advancement. As proof of his continued and unremitting attention to his business, his practice increased rapidly soon after his marriage ; and at the time of his death, he had so far succeeded in gaining the confidence of the community, that there were few practitioners whose patronage was more extensive.

In the spring of 1831, I had the honor of being associated with him in a course of medical lectures, which were delivered in this city, and he fully sustained the reputation he had previously acquired. It would not, perhaps, be improper to remark, that few individuals combined the various qualities of a lecturer in a more eminent degree than Dr.

Pendleton ; as a speaker, he was distinct and fluent—as a teacher, instructive and intelligible.

When the New-York School of Medicine was organized, in October last, Dr. P. presented himself as a lecturer in that institution, and I again had the honor of being united with him in the course which he contemplated giving. He delivered his introductory lecture, which was remarkable for its eloquence and liberality ; a few days after this, commenced the effects of that fatal disease, which has thus prematurely taken from us one of our most promising and enlightened members.

Dr. Pendleton was a man of superior talents—indefatigable industry—great activity of mind and body—of uncommon acquirements, both professional and otherwise—sincere, unostentatious piety—warm and affectionate feelings—sterling integrity, and amiable deportment. He met death with the firmness of a man—the calmness and resignation of a Christian. He manifested no fear of it. Nor could this be called indifference ; for it was the natural effect of that tranquillity of mind which every Christian enjoys, who feels that, in the different relations of life, he has discharged his duties towards his fellow men with fidelity and honor. He retained his intellectual faculties until the last moment, and conversed rationally and calmly in reference to his situation. He was fully aware that he was about to die, and bade a last farewell to his family and friends, without betraying the slightest emotion. He died January 9th, 1832.

We have thus taken a brief view of the life of our friend, and although he never occupied any public station by which he might have been more generally known, still, in the history of his private character we have so many interesting subjects for reflection, so many traits of the purest benevolence and most scrupulous honor, that it would be well to ponder over them, and consider him a fit example for our imitation. He possessed all the elements of future greatness—his extensive knowledge in medicine, his intimate acquaintance with the classics, his familiarity with the Greek, Latin, French, and

Spanish languages, and, above all, his strict, undeviating professional honor, would no doubt have placed him among the brightest stars of our country, if his life had been prolonged but for a few years more. He was ambitious, but not presumptuous; he was anxious to excel, and disdained that fame which was not the immediate offspring of his own merit. His views were enlarged and liberal—in a word, he was a consistent, industrious, honest man.

The profession of medicine has, in every age, attracted the profoundest attention of the philosopher and naturalist. Antiquity furnishes us with a list of some of the best and ablest men that ever lived, who sacrificed their lives in endeavoring to improve the healing art. They adopted it as well worthy of their deepest study, and by the exercise of their talents and industry succeeded in elevating it to a level calculated to call forth the admiration of the most inveterate sceptic. But, gentlemen, constituted as society is among us, there will always be objections raised against our profession, and these will continue to increase, until such changes shall have been effected in its moral government, as will bid defiance to alligation.

To be well qualified to practice medicine—to be covered with the imaginary honors conferred by a diploma—to have gained the confidence of the community, and consequently its patronage, will not of themselves be a sufficient guaranty that we will perform with fidelity the duties necessarily involved in the discharge of our professional obligations.

That profession, than which none is more noble, none more worthy of our best exertions and honest ambition, is too often degraded by converting the privileges it imparts to the mean and pitiful business of pecuniary gain. Professional courtesy, principle, integrity, virtue—all are sacrificed at the shrine of filthy lucre. When men, from whom we might have expected different conduct, lend their names and influence to the furtherance of such objects as these, is it not the duty of every individual in the medical profession to step forward and fearlessly proclaim his disapprobation? Can there be

any thing which calls more imperiously for the indignation of honorable men—any subject connected with our profession which demands more serious investigation?

I am ready to admit, in the language of inspiration, that “every laborer is worthy of his hire;” but when I perceive the sublime profession which we have all selected as worthy of our especial consideration, a profession which ranks among its members some of the best and most enlightened men that ever flourished in any country, prostituted to the ignoble and servile purposes to which some of its members have endeavored to make it subserve, I cannot but give utterance to my feelings. What was the opinion of our distinguished friend on this subject? Is it not contained in the example he has left us? Where was there a more rigid observer of the code of medical ethics? where a more disinterested practitioner? We should imitate his example, and if we give practical proof of the estimation in which we hold his character, we shall improve our profession by improving its moral condition.

It appears to me, and I would advance the opinion with due deference, that the difficulties existing in our profession may be ascribed to two distinct causes. In the first place, individuals commence the study of medicine without having the necessary preparatory education. Many are induced to prosecute it as a means of subsistence, and the consequence is, that it becomes a sort of business transaction. The attention of the practitioner is too often directed to the accumulation of wealth, and if this object be attained, he seems to disregard the evil he may inflict on mankind by thus suffering his mind to be entirely engrossed by the sole consideration of his own interest. In the second place, the advancement of our profession is retarded in this country in consequence of the laws regulating medical instruction.

If the avenues to distinction were thrown open—if the medical student, in commencing his studies, was assured that his future elevation depended exclusively on his own exertions and industry, how diligently would he not employ his time? A thought like this would excite his best energies,

and call forth all his intellectual vigor. It will not be denied that America possesses talent, genius, and all the other requisites for the constitution of a great and powerful nation. Look at the annals of our country—examine the biographical history of our infant land, and tell me that we are not on a level with the first nations in the world, as regards energy of character and strong natural talent. But genius may be baffled, talent prove unavailing, and industry be unrepaid, without the existence of certain circumstances which will call them all into active operation. There must be inducement and opportunity for their free and unrestricted exercise. What but the peculiar circumstances of the times would ever have developed the character of our honored Washington? What would ever have exhibited to the world that splendid galaxy of men, the revered fathers of our country, but the trying occasion which called upon them for the exercise of their best energies? But for the French revolution, Edmund Burke, the greatest man perhaps that ever lived, would never have attained the eminence he did, and which challenges all competition. Shall I here speak of my distinguished friend and preceptor, now no more? Godman, a name dear to the hearts of all of us, was perhaps as strong an illustration of the principle I am advocating as any that could be adduced. Yes, Godman, thy memory we revere, and the inheritance you have left us, thy example, we will prize as the gift of our best and dearest friend!

If we enquire the effect of this principle in other countries, we shall discover that in France it is carried to great perfection. Perhaps there is no country in the world which could present us with a better model, one more worthy of our imitation. The French government is closely identified with the interests of science, and its liberality with regard to the facilities afforded to those who seek instruction, presents a striking contrast with the contracted spirit of its opposite neighbor. In France, every thing invites to industry—there is always strong inducement for exertion. Favoritism, state patronage, are not the means by which an individual is

there elevated to an important dignity. He is required to give ample proof of his merit; and before he is suffered to fill a vacancy, he must have satisfied the faculty that he is better qualified for the situation than any of the numerous candidates with whom he may have competed. The young medical men are all well educated in France; they understand their profession, are untiring in their industry, and cannot be turned from the object they have proposed to themselves—the excelling of each other by fair and honorable competition.

As regards the principle on which professors or teachers of medicine are appointed in this country, we object to it on broad and, we think, tenable grounds. By the present system of filling our medical colleges with teachers, what evidence is there of excelling merit on the part of those empowered to instruct? If, as practitioners or writers in medicine, they have exhibited any proof of individual merit, it certainly is not to be presumed that they are better qualified than many others who, if opportunity had offered, might have shown themselves vastly their superiors. Partiality, intrigue, the influence of party, are too often the means by which these appointments are obtained; and if this fact be once conceded, it is very evident that our system of medical instruction is defective.

The Latin poet has transmitted us a motto, which I am sure none but a narrow mind can object to: “*palmam qui meruit ferat*,” says he, and it is in accordance with this glorious adage that we are to stand or fall by our own individual exertions. If this principle be recognized as correct, and extended throughout our country, we shall not only have able teachers, but it will follow as a necessary consequence that medical men will be well educated. In conformity with it, nothing is to sustain an individual but his own merit; he stands before the community a candidate for public patronage; he presents himself to students of medicine as a teacher of some particular department of the profession they are about to prosecute. He is not alone; there may be twenty others

offering to instruct in the same branch. What then is the consequence? All will commence their labors; all will have an equal opportunity of displaying whatever merit they may possess. If this be not a stimulus to exertion, then I am deceived in my conceptions of human character.

Wealth, aristocracy, ancestry, all must wane before the lights of knowledge. It is the surest bulwark of our country, and if we wish to perpetuate the glorious charter of our liberties, our only bond of security will be the preservation of science. Let us remember that we the people are the guardians of our common country; on us devolves the responsible duty of preserving pure and unsullied the precious inheritance transmitted to us. Whilst to others is assigned the task of protecting our *body politic*, to us belongs the privilege of improving the profession we have adopted, and of sustaining it against the combined efforts of corruption and empiricism. Under existing circumstances, there is but one mode of ridding ourselves of the inconveniences by which the medical profession is so much oppressed; but one way of establishing a system of medical ethics from which we may expect permanent advantage. Abolish intrigue, encourage industry, afford every individual among us a fair field for action, and the result will demonstrate the excellence of the principle you have adopted.

The sentiments just advanced appear to me to be peculiarly appropriate on the present occasion; for the principle they inculcate is, in some measure, identified with the life of the individual whose memory we have this day assembled to commemorate.

Gentlemen, members of the Medical Society, allow me to conclude this address by recommending your serious attention to the character of the late Dr. Pendleton. Let us take him as a model; and rely upon it, if we imitate his example, our memories will be honored by those destined to succeed us.

